

IV.—*A List of the Birds of Melville Island, Northern Territory, Australia.* By GREGORY M. MATHEWS, M.B.O.U.

MELVILLE ISLAND lies to the north of Darwin in the Northern Territory of the Australian Commonwealth, at the mouth of Van Diemen Gulf. From Darwin it is distant between thirty and forty miles, and about the same distance from Port Essington. Taking Melville and Bathurst Islands together, the length from extreme east to west is one hundred and twelve miles, and from north to south about fifty-six miles between their extreme points.

Melville Island was discovered by Captain Phillip P. King, in the 'Mermaid,' on May the 12th, 1818, and named after the then First Lord of the Admiralty, Viscount Melville.

A few years later the British Government of the day was considering the idea of settlements somewhere on the north coast of Australia. Port Essington was first thought of, but on the ships (containing everything necessary to form a settlement) going to that place, it was considered by those in authority that fresh water was not abundant enough, so Melville Island was selected, and on the 30th of September, 1824, a settlement was formed on Apsley Strait. On account of the continued hostilities between the whites and blacks it was decided to abandon the settlement; so, on the 31st of March, 1829, everything was removed to Raffles Bay, which had been founded on the 18th of June, 1827, in anticipation of the failure at Melville Island. In October 1887, an exploring party went across the Island (*cf.* Trans. Roy. Soc. South Austr. vol. xv. 1892, p. 114).

The greater part of the island is covered with Eucalyptus forests; the principal feature of the undergrowth is the large number of cycads, the place of which is sometimes taken by small fan-palms.

It is well watered by many small creeks which usually empty into the head of a large tidal creek. The only large creek (Jessie) is in the north of the island; it runs through a large area of low-lying ground near the sea. This tract is flooded by the creek and forms the only large swamp on the

island. The swamp varies in depth from a few inches to several feet, and is the home of many large crocodiles and forms their breeding-ground.

This swamp is a strange place; it is situated at the head of a salt-water arm, and is about three miles wide by eight long. So far as could be judged, it was covered with reeds, but not thickly. Through the centre runs Jessie's Creek, which is about fifty yards wide and about ten feet deep. This creek is bordered with white and blue water-lilies. On the upper portions of the swamp is a great forest of Paper-bark trees, growing in the water, which varies from six inches to three feet in depth. There are masses of undergrowth here, also reeds, a cane-like plant, sword-grass, and rushes, so that it is almost impossible to get through. This growth of reeds, sword-grass, etc., continues up the creek for some miles, but the Paper-bark trees get fewer as one advances into the drier ground.

The only plains on the island lie about 10 miles east of Gordon Point. The patches of jungle are small and scattered far apart. During the wet season, which usually starts in December and ends in March, about 70 inches of rain falls. In October and November occasional heavy thunderstorms occur.

Buchanan's Islets, which lie about two miles from Melville Island and off the south-east end of Apsley Strait, which divides Melville from Bathurst Island, consist of a large patch of mangroves with a high sandy beach on the seaward side and a few small sand-dunes on the eastern end. This place was a great stronghold of all the Waders, the beaches being thronged with thousands of them at high tide.

The classification and nomenclature used, is that of my new 'List of the Birds of Australia.'

1. *Megapodius duperryi tumulus*. Western Scrub-Fowl.
Megapodius tumulus Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1842, p. 20 :
 Coburg Peninsula.

On the 1st of December, 1911, a nesting-mound of this species was found in a narrow belt of jungle growing along

a small creek. It measured twelve feet in diameter and four high, and had holes burrowed into it in all directions. The pair of birds was at the mound, and the female had a fully developed egg in the oviduct.

As the mound was approached the male flew into a neighbouring tree, and at the sound of the shot the female, which was in the bottom of a hole about two feet deep, flew into the same tree. This was at the edge of the jungle, and only shaded from the sun on one side.

Other mounds were seen, the largest being about ten feet high, with a circumference of thirty-five yards at the base; their shape is an irregular cone, the average size being six feet high and fifteen in diameter; they are placed near the edge of the jungle; this is in small patches, the largest being about 150 acres.

The breeding-season is from November to January.

2. *Synoicus ypsilophorus cervinus*. Northern Brown Quail.
Synoicus cervinus Gould, Handb. Birds Austr. vol. ii. 1865, p. 195: Port Essington.

On the 12th of October several small flocks were seen about the camp. The various coveys seem to have favourite localities, as one can always be sure of seeing some in certain places. About the 7th of December they seemed to be pairing. By the 2nd of February, 1912, they had all paired and were difficult to flush, as the grass was long and dense; by March they were in large coveys accompanied by many young birds.

3. *Turnix maculosa pseutes*. Western Black-backed Quail.
Turnix maculosa pseutes Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 180: Parry's Creek, North-west Australia.

Very rare on the Island.

4. *Austroturnix castanota melvillensis*. Melville-Island Chestnut-backed Quail.

Turnix castanota melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 27: Melville Island.

On the 10th of October these birds were common, many

large coveys being seen. Sometimes when flushed they rise in a bunch, as though they had been close together on the ground, only one or two stragglers remaining; at others they rise in singles, twos, or threes, as though they were scattered, perhaps feeding. They are a good sporting bird, as they can usually be flushed again if marked down, for they seldom run more than a few yards. After a shot, and the birds are scattered, one can hear low moaning calls, which gradually cease as the covey gets together again. Usually each covey keeps to the same locality. As many as twenty have been seen in one lot, but twelve would be about a fair average.

On the 15th of November a covey was approached cautiously, and the females were seen to be chasing the male birds round and round until the latter flew a few yards away. This was repeated again and again. One female was shot to be quite sure of the sex.

On the 10th of March, 1912, the females had large eggs in their ovaries.

5. *Ptilinopus regina ewingii*. Rose-crowned Fruit-Pigeon.

Ptilinopus ewingii Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1842, p. 19 : Port Essington.

These Pigeons seem to be distributed all over the Island. They usually perch amongst the dense foliage in the patches of jungle growing along the creeks, which makes them very difficult to see. When disturbed they fly away at great speed, usually keeping above the tops of the trees. They feed on a fruit like a large cherry, and usually some birds are found in every tree with ripe fruit. They nest in January and are non-migratory.

6. *Myristicivora bicolor spilorrhoea*. Nutmeg-Pigeon.

Carpophaga spilorrhoea Gray, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1858, p. 186 : Aru Islands.

Nest. This was built in the horizontal fork of a mangrove about eight feet from the mud, and consisted of a few small twigs, and was most frail. A second nest, built in a stout fork

of a Paper-bark tree, growing in the great swamp, was placed about twelve feet from the water; it was very frail, and the egg could be seen through the nest. The portion of the nest that could be so called, measured six inches by six, but the ends of the twigs projected out beyond this.

Eggs. The clutch consists of one white egg measuring 41 mm. by 34.

On the 2nd of October these birds were seen and heard in the mangroves. They came to some trees near Apsley Straits every day to feed, both in the morning and, again, about four o'clock in the afternoon. They were never in flocks or very plentiful. On the 1st of December a nest was found in a tree in the open forest, the bird was only dislodged after several sticks were thrown at her; after she had left the nest a small young one was found, on which she had been sitting. This nest was about thirty feet from the ground.

On the 15th of December a flock of five was seen; this was the greatest number noticed together. On the north side of the Island they were numerous, and two more nests were found, both in very tall trees and placed about sixty feet from the ground.

On the 14th of January, 1912, several small flocks were seen, all flying high, and in the sixteen days ending on the 3rd of February only one bird was noticed. After the 18th of March they had all disappeared.

7. *Chrysauchœna humeralis apsleyi*. 'Northern Barred-shouldered Dove.

Geopelia humeralis apsleyi Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 27 : Melville Island.

Very numerous, found feeding in companies of up to 30 birds. When flushed, these flocks split up into threes and fours. It may be that the small flocks come together on extra good feeding-grounds, until one large flock of 30 or so get together. They were plentiful towards the end of October, but decreased in number by the middle of December, and were again numerous on the 13th of January, 1912, on

the north side of the Island on the ridges bordering the great swamp. There was good cover for them there in the low bushes with plenty of vines growing over them.

8. *Geopelia placida placida*. Northern Ground-Dove.

Geopelia placida Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1844, p. 55 : Port Essington.

These birds are very numerous, and are seen in parties of six or seven individuals. On the 10th of October a nest containing two very small young ones was found. This was built in a horizontal limb of a small Paper-bark tree growing in a patch of scrub. It was composed of a few twigs, and fell to pieces when touched, and was placed about ten feet from the ground.

It seems a stationary bird, as it is plentiful on Apsley Straits, but rare on the north side of the Island ; only one pair was seen there, on the 14th of January, 1912, and this was in the centre of the great swamp, about a mile from solid land. It is non-migratory.

9. *Chalcophaps chrysochlora longirostris*. Long-billed Green Pigeon.

Chalcophaps longirostris Gould, Birds Austr. vol. i. Introd. 1848, p. lxxix : Port Essington.

Not plentiful. They seem to feed near the mangroves, and when flushed sometimes fly into a tree about thirty yards away, or if disturbed in a patch of open scrub, about half a mile from the mangroves, they fly through it, keeping near the ground, and alight either on the latter or in the lower branches of the scrub. They left in December, but on the 3rd of June, 1912, a pair was flushed and the female had a soft-shelled egg in the oviduct. During this month they were common and were usually found on a ridge. On the 7th of June two immature birds were shot, and apparently they breed at any time of the year, as in November half-grown ones were collected, and they were nesting in June.

10. *Phaps chalcoptera consobrina*. Northern Bronze-winged Pigeon.

Phaps chalcoptera consobrina Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 188: Parry's Creek, North-west Australia.

Not numerous, but usually a few are seen every day feeding under the wattle-trees near the mangroves either singly or in pairs. On the 6th of November several young birds were noticed, fully feathered, but still very small. They were not accompanied by their parents, but were usually in pairs. After the 7th of December none were seen until the following June.

11. *Terraphaps smithii smithii*. Naked-eyed Partridge-Pigeon.

Columba smithii Jardine and Selby, Illustr. Ornith. vol. ii. 1830, pl. 104: Northern Territory.

These birds are very numerous, and usually found in flocks numbering up to twenty birds. They lie very close and generally rise at one's feet. Sometimes the whole flock will spring up in a bunch from the same spot, but more often in ones and twos. It is difficult to see them when they are on the ground, unless they move. When flushed they either fly into a tree near by or shoot up clean over the tree-tops and away. The timber is too tall and thick to see how far they go. They feed on the large black seeds of the common Eucalyptus of the island. This tree is a fine straight one which bears many large seed-vessels. Later in the season they feed on grass seed and become very thin.

When scattered, the call-note is a low moaning "coo" repeated many times until the flock is gathered again. On the north side of the Island they seemed rare, but in February 1912 they were quite plentiful near Apsley Straits. They were very fat and the skins tender. They are one of the best table-birds Mr. Rogers has ever eaten.

The allied subspecies, which Mr. Rogers collected in different parts of north-west Australia, also feeds on the seeds of this same kind of Eucalyptus tree (Wollybutt).

12. *Eulabeornis castaneoventris melvillensis*. Grey Chestnut-bellied Rail.

Eulabeornis castaneoventris melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 29: Melville Island.

This was the first bird's call heard on Melville Island by Mr. Rogers. Near Derby he was able to bring this Rail up to him by beating two sticks together. The nest on the Island was built on a fallen mangrove in the centre of a large patch of this timber, and placed about four feet from the mud. The materials were coarse twigs, and the nest was of the usual straggling build and exactly resembled those found in the north-west of Australia.

The natives of Melville Island confirm what the natives of Port Torment in north-west Australia say—namely, that this bird cannot fly.

Two eggs were collected near Apsley Straits on the 6th of November; these have the ground-colour light stone or buff, sparingly covered with dots of dull red and lavender, and measure 52–54 mm. by 36·5. The clutch generally numbers four or five.

13. *Poliolimnas cinereus leucophrys*. Northern White-browed Crake.

Porzana leucophrys Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1847, p. 33: Port Essington.

This bird was numerous on the north side of the Island in the great swamp.

Nest. Bowl-shaped, and placed in a half-dead bunch of water-lilies and reeds. It consisted of dead and green rushes bent down and interlaced. Inside this outer foundation was the nest proper, composed of short pieces of dead rushes, which were interwoven into the outer nest. The bottom was lined with short pieces of dead rushes. The measurements are: outside 9 by 9 by 8 inches deep, inside $4\frac{1}{2}$ by $4\frac{1}{2}$ by 2 inches deep. It was found on the 12th of January, 1912.

Eggs. Clutch four; ground-colour pale stone, covered all over, but more thickly at the larger end, with reddish-brown

spots; a few lavender ones are also distributed over the surface. Axis 28 mm., diameter 21.

Many old nests were found, similar to the above-described one. They are somewhat like the nests of the Bald Coot, only smaller, but they are large for so small a bird.

This Crake is rather noisy (in January, at any rate). One has difficulty in seeing it, but when one hears the sound, one must stop, and the bird will come within a few feet of the canoe; in fact, it is rather difficult to shoot it without destroying the specimen. It moves easily on the reeds, grasping the upright stems, and apparently is as much at home when walking in this manner as when running over the water-lilies and weeds. The birds were seen and heard in the dense growth of sword-grass and rushes on the swampy banks of Jessie Creek, as well as on the big swamp, where it was about one mile from solid land.

14. *Thalasseus bergi pelecanoides*. Northern Crested Tern.

Sterna pelecanoides King, Survey Intertrop. Coasts Austr. 1826, p. 422: Torres Strait.

Common.

15. *Sternula albifrons tormenti*. Western White-shafted Ternlet.

Sterna sinensis tormenti Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 210: Point Torment, North-west Australia.

Common.

16. *Bruchigavia novæhollandiæ gouldi*. Northern Silver Gull.

Gelastes gouldi Bonaparte, Naumannia, 1854, p. 216: Torres Strait.

Fairly common.

17. *Arenaria interpres oahuensis*. Eastern Turnstone.

Tringa oahuensis Bloxham, Voy. 'Blonde,' Sandwich Isl. 1826, p. 251: Sandwich Islands.

Fairly common.

18. *Hæmatopus ostralegus picatus*. Northern Pied Oyster-catcher.

Hæmatopus picatus King, Survey Intertrop. Coast Austr. 1826, p. 420: Point Torment, North-west Australia.

Fairly common, but very wary; one flock of twenty was seen.

19. *Erythrogonys cinctus mixtus*. Western Red-kneed Dotterel.

Erythrogonys cinctus mixtus Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 215: Parry's Creek, North-west Australia.

Not common.

20. *Lobivanellus miles personata*. Lesser Masked Plover.

Lobivanellus personatus Gould, Birds Austr. vol. vi. 1842, pl. 10: Coburg Peninsula, Northern Territory.

A pair came near Apsley Straits on the 1st of December and again on the 3rd of February. Another pair was seen in the north side of the Island on the 30th of December.

21. *Squatarola squatarola hypomelus*. Eastern Grey Plover.

Charadrius hypomelus Pallas, Reise Russ. Reichs, vol. iii. 1776, p. 699: Siberia.

This species is rare on the Island, only a few being seen in November and December; after the 13th of the latter month no more were observed till April, when they were in twos and threes with other Waders, but never in flocks by themselves.

22. *Pluvialis dominicus fulvus*. Lesser Golden Plover.

Charadrius fulvus Gmelin, Syst. Nat. 1789, p. 687: Tahiti.

A few were seen at different times; they were not nearly so wild as Mr. Rogers found them at Point Torment in north-west Australia. None were seen on the north side of the Island or anywhere else after the 3rd of February, 1912, until April, when small flocks appeared.

23. *Cirripidesmus mongolus mongolus*. Mongolian Sand-Dotterel.

Charadrius mongolus Pallas, Reise Russ. Reichs, vol. iii. 1776, p. 700: Mongolia.

Small parties were seen on the beach in November, but none were observed after the 25th of that month till April and May, when many were noticed in full breeding-plumage.

24. *Pagoa geoffroyi*. Large Sand-Dotterel.

Charadrius geoffroyi Wagler, Syst. Av., Charadr. 1827, p. 61, sp. 19: Java.

This is one of the commonest Waders on the Island, and was usually seen in twos and threes, but never in numbers till February, when large flocks arrived; many of the birds were now in breeding-plumage, and were very wild. This species is never seen anywhere but on salt tidal creeks and on the sea-shore. They are equally common on mud-banks, sandy beaches, and shingle.

25. *Leucopoliis ruficapillus tormenti*. Pale Red-capped Dotterel.

Charadrius ruficapillus tormenti Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 217: Point Torment, North-west Australia.

Not common.

26. *Numenius cyanopus*. Australian Curlew.

Numenius cyanopus Vieillot, Nouv. Dict. d'Hist. Nat. vol. viii. 1817, p. 306: New South Wales.

Fairly common but very wary.

27. *Phæopus phæopus variegatus*. Eastern Whimbrel.

Tantalus variegatus Scopoli, Del. Flor. Faun. Insub. fasc. ii. 1786, p. 92: Luzon.

During November only about half-a-dozen Whimbrel were seen, and these in the belts of mangroves. This is another species that is only found on the beach and tidal creeks, and is never seen away from the salt water. In February they appeared a little more numerous.

28. *Vetola lapponica baueri*. Eastern Barred-rumped Godwit.

Limosa baueri Naumann, Vögel Deutschl. vol. viii. 1836, p. 429: Victoria.

Common.

29. *Heteroscelus incanus brevipes*. Grey-rumped Sandpiper.

Totanus brevipes Vieillot, Nouv. Dict. d'Hist. Nat. vol. vi. 1816, p. 410: Port Essington, Northern Territory.

Several were seen towards the end of January and beginning of February, 1912.

30. *Actitis hypoleucos aurita*. Eastern Common Sandpiper.

Tringa aurita Latham, Index Ornith. Suppl. 1801, p. lxvi: New South Wales.

These birds are fairly numerous and tame for Waders. At spring tides, when the beaches are covered at high water, this species feeds in the forest-country, which comes right down to the beach. Usually it is solitary in its habits, but sometimes it is seen in parties of three or four and even in company with other Waders. Up to the 3rd of February, 1912, it did not increase or decrease in numbers. It is never found near fresh water, but always on the beach or on salt-water creeks.

31. *Terekia cinerea javanica*. Eastern Terek Sandpiper.

Totanus javanicus Horsfield, Trans. Linn. Soc. Lond. vol. xiii. 1821, p. 193: Java.

Common.

32. *Glottis nebularius glottoides*. Eastern Greenshank.

Totanus glottoides Vigors, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1831, p. 173: Himalayan Mts., India.

One of the most wary of Waders, second only to *Numenius cyanopus*. It is rare on the Island and none were seen after January 1912. Mr. Rogers often got this species on swamps and water-holes in Kimberley, north-west Australia.

33. *Calidris leucophæa tridactyla*. Eastern Sanderling.

Tringa tridactyla Pallas, Zoogr. Rosso-Asiat. vol. ii. 1827, p. 198 : Lake Baikal, Asia.

Very rare.

34. *Pisobia minuta ruficollis*. Little Stint.

Tringa ruficollis Pallas, Reise Russ. Reichs, vol. iii. 1776, p. 700 : Siberia.

A few were seen during November, but all had gone by December the 7th; they were very numerous during May 1912 and were mixed with other species.

35. *Erolia ferruginea chinensis*. Eastern Curlew-Sandpiper.

Tringa (Pelidna) chinensis Gray, Zool. Misc. 1831, p. 2 : China.

Common.

36. *Canutus canutus rogersi*. Eastern Knot.

Canutus canutus rogersi Mathews, Birds Austr. vol. iii. 1913, p. 270 : Japan.

Common.

37. *Anteliotringa tenuirostris*. Great Knot.

Totanus tenuirostris Horsfield, Trans. Linn. Soc. Lond. vol. xiii. 1821, p. 192 : Java.

Common.

38. *Limicola falcinellus sibirica*. Eastern Broad-billed Sandpiper.

Limicola sibirica Dresser, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1876, p. 674 : Siberia.

Rare.

39. *Subspilura megala*. Larger Pin-tailed Snipe.

Gallinago megala Swinhoe, Ibis, 1861, p. 343 : Peking, China.

One was obtained on January the 13th and another on the 15th.

40. *Irediparra gallinacea rothschildi*. Western Comb-crested Jacana.

Irediparra gallinacea rothschildi Mathews, Nov. Zool.

vol. xviii. 1912, p. 224 : Parry's Creek, North-west Australia.

This bird was common on Jessie Creek, on the north side of the Island. There is a wide border of water-lilies of the purple and the white varieties, and in this place the birds were quite at home.

The eggs were placed on the floating roots of a water-lily, with some rotting vegetation. There was no trace of a nest. The patch of roots measured 10 inches by 10. The eggs were only half-an-inch above the water-level and their lower sides were quite wet.

Eggs. Clutch four; ground-colour brown, marked all over with long, black, irregular lines; axis 27-28 mm., diameter 21-22.

The young in the egg had the frontal lappet barely discernible and the feet had no abnormal length of claw, although they had well-developed feathers.

41. *Stiltia isabella*. Australian Pratincole.

Glareola isabella Vieillot, Analyse Nouv. Ornith. 1816, p. 69 : Australia.

Rare.

42. *Burhinus magnirostris rufescens*. Little Stone-Plover.

Burhinus magnirostris rufescens Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 225 : Parry's Creek, North-west Australia.

This species was rare in November, but got more plentiful in December. None were seen on the north side of the Island. When disturbed they usually come out from under a bush and run for a considerable distance before taking to flight.

43. *Orthorhamphus magnirostris neglectus*. Long-billed Stone-Plover.

Esacus magnirostris neglectus Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 226 : Lewes Island, Western Australia.

This is also a rare bird on the Island, and is never seen away from the sea-shore.

44. *Austrotis australis derbyi*. Northern Bustard.

Choriotis australis derbyi Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 226 : Derby, North-west Australia.

Very rare on the Island, although about ten miles east of Gordon Point, Apsley Straits, many were seen, but they are very wild. They were on a large, sandy, and stony plain which was covered with low bush and had just been burnt—in fact, three of the birds were shot at the fire when they were keeping just ahead of the flames catching grasshoppers as they rose.

45. *Mathewsia rubicunda argentea*. Silver Crane.

Mathewsia rubicunda argentea Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 227 : Fitzroy River, North-west Australia. Rare.

46. *Threskiornis molucca strictipennis*. White Ibis.

Ibis strictipennis Gould, Synops. Birds Austr. pt. iv. App. 1838, p. 7 : New South Wales.

Only two or three birds were seen in three months, and these were very wild ; none were found in the great swamp. They feed among the mangroves on crabs and shell-fish.

47. *Spatheria regia*. Black-billed Spoonbill.

Platalea regia Gould, Synops. Birds Austr. pt. iv. App. 1838, p. 7 : New South Wales.

Seen in small flocks and always flying high.

48. *Xenorhynchus asiaticus australis*. Black-necked Stork.

Mycteria australis Shaw, Trans. Linn. Soc. Lond. vol. v. 1800, p. 33 : New South Wales.

Rare.

49. *Typhon sumatrana mathewsæ*. Great-billed Heron.

Ardea sumatrana mathewsæ Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 230 : Cooktown, North Queensland.

Two seen in three months. They fed in an open patch in the mangroves, and when disturbed flew into a tree near by. None were seen after the 7th of December.

50. *Egretta garzetta immaculata*. Lesser Egret.

Herodias immaculata Gould, Birds Austr. vol. vi. 1846, pl. 58: Port Essington.

Fairly common, but difficult to obtain.

51. *Herodias alba syrmatophora*. White Egret.

Herodias syrmatophorus Gould, Birds Austr. vol. vi. 1846, pl. 56: New South Wales.

These birds are not numerous. They are very wary, and, although scattered over the swamp, could only be seen when they rose from the reeds, which in most places were not very thick, but were tall enough to completely hide the birds.

52. *Tonophoyx aruensis flavirostris*. Pied Egret.

Notophoyx flavirostris Sharpe, Cat. Birds Brit. Mus. vol. xxvi. 1898, p. 654: Port Essington.

Rare.

53. *Demigretta greyi*. White Reef-Heron.

Herodias greyi Gould, Birds Austr. vol. vi. 1848, pl. 61: Raine Island, Queensland.

Rare.

54. *Nycticorax caledonicus australasiæ*. Night-Heron.

Ardea australasiæ Vieillot, Tabl. Encyc. Méth., Ornith. vol. iii. 1823, p. 1130: New South Wales.

These birds are rare on the Island. They were seen in the mangroves and fresh-water creeks, and a few in the great swamp.

55. *Butorides striata stagnatilis*. Little Mangrove-Bittern.

Ardetta stagnatilis Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. for 1847, 1848, p. 221: Port Essington.

Often seen in the mangroves or along the tidal creeks.

56. *Dupetor flavicollis olivei*. Northern Yellow-necked Bittern.

Ardeiralla flavicollis olivei Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 234: Johnston River, Queensland.

Nest. This was built in a three-pronged fork of a Paper-bark tree that had fallen into the creek and was still growing. It consisted of a platform of Paper-bark twigs with the centre covered with finer twigs. The eggs were placed in a slight depression. It was about two feet above the level of the water and was partly hidden by leafy branches. The platform measured 14 inches by 10, and was 6 inches thick in the centre.

Eggs. Clutch two to three, white; axis 42 mm., diameter 35.

Breeding-season. December and January.

This species was fairly numerous, but very wild and hard to obtain on account of the vegetation in the swamp.

57. *Anseranas semipalmata.* Pied Goose.

Anas semipalmata Latham, Trans. Linn. Soc. Lond. vol. iv. 1798, p. 103: Hawkesbury River, New South Wales.

First seen passing over on the 20th of November; after that many flocks went by every evening. They were plentiful in the great swamp. Owing to the crocodiles (*Crocodilus porosus*) not many eggs are found on the Island, though they breed abundantly on the mainland.

58. *Cheniscus pulchellus.* Green Goose-Teal.

Nettopus pulchellus Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1841, p. 89: Port Essington.

This species was very numerous on the edges of the great swamp and on Jessie Creek in December. They perch in trees regularly and may even breed in holes in them. Those shot on the 10th of January, 1912, had eggs in the ovaries as large as haricot-beans. Their note is a fairly loud whistle.

59. *Dendrocygna javanica gouldi.* Whistling Duck.

Dendrocygna gouldi Gould, Handb. Birds Austr. vol. ii. 1865, p. 374: Port Essington.

A few were seen from October to December. On the 10th of January, 1912, a large flock passed over.

60. *Leptotarsis eytoni*. Plumed Whistling Duck.
Leptotarsis eytoni Eyton, Monogr. Anat. 1838, p. 111 :
 North-west Australia.
 Rare.
61. *Nyroca australis*. White-eyed Duck.
Nyroca australis Eyton, Monogr. Anat. 1838, p. 160 :
 New South Wales.
 Rare.
62. *Microcarbo melanoleucus*. Little Cormorant.
Hydrocorax melanoleucus Vieillot, Nouv. Dict. d'Hist.
 Nat. vol. viii. 1817, p. 88 : New South Wales.
 This is the only Cormorant on the Island and is very rare.
 It was only found on Jessie Creek.
63. *Anhinga novæhollandiæ*. Darter.
Plotus novæhollandiæ Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1847, p. 34 :
 New South Wales.
 Very rare.
64. *Catoptropelicanus conspicillatus westralis*. Western
 Pelican.
Pelecanus conspicillatus westralis Mathews, Nov. Zool.
 vol. xviii. 1912, p. 244 : Perth, Western Australia.
 Very rare.
65. *Circus assimilis rogersi*. Lesser Spotted Harrier.
Circus assimilis rogersi Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii.
 1912, p. 244 : Fitzroy River, North-west Australia.
 Very rare.
66. *Leucospiza novæhollandiæ novæhollandiæ*. White Gos-
 hawk.
Falco novæhollandiæ Gmelin, Syst. Nat. 1788, p. 264 :
 Tasmania.
 Rare.
67. *Urospiza fasciata didima*. Northern Goshawk.
Astur fasciatus didimus Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i.
 1912, p. 33 : Melville Island.
 Very rare.

68. *Uroaëtus* sp. incert.

One seen.

69. *Cuncuma leucogaster*. White-bellied Sea-Eagle.

Falco leucogaster Gmelin, Syst. Nat. 1788, p. 257 : New South Wales.

Rare.

70. *Haliastur indus leucosternus*. White-headed Sea-Eagle.

Haliaeetus leucosternus Gould, Synops. Birds Austr. pt. iii. 1838, pl. 40 : New South Wales.

Plentiful on the north side of the island ; two nests were found in January.

71. *Haliastur sphenurus*. Whistling Eagle.

Milvus sphenurus Vieillot, Nouv. Dict. d'Hist. Nat. vol. xx. 1818, p. 564 : New South Wales.

A few seen and two nests, both the latter built in tall Paper-bark trees, in the great swamp.

72. *Milvus korschun affinis*. Allied Kite.

Milvus affinis Gould, Synops. Birds Austr. pt. iii. pl. 47, 1838 : New South Wales.

Not common.

73. *Falco longipennis apsleyi*. Northern Little Falcon.

Falco lunulatus apsleyi Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 33 : Melville Island.

Very rare.

74. *Ieracidea berigora melvillensis*. Northern Brown Hawk.

Ieracidea berigora melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 34 : Melville Island.

Only found near Apsley Straits, none seen on the north side of the Island. Mr. Rogers noticed that they differed from those seen in north-west Australia.

75. *Cerchneis cenchroides milligani*. Dusky Waukeen Kestrel.

Cerchneis cenchroides milligani Mathews, Nov. Zool.

vol. xviii. 1912, p. 253 : Parry's Creek, North-west Australia.

Not common.

76. *Pandion haliaëtus cristatus*. White-headed Osprey.

Buteo cristatus Vieillot, Nouv. Dict. d'Hist. Nat. vol. iv. 1816, p. 481 : Tasmania.

This species is fairly numerous, but only on Apsley Straits.

77. *Spiloglaux boobook melvillensis*. Red Boobook Owl.

Ninox boobook melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 34 : Melville Island.

This bird seems rare in the Island ; it is sometimes seen in daytime.

78. *Tyto novæhollandiæ melvillensis*. Northern Chestnut-faced Owl.

Tyto novæhollandiæ melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 35 : Melville Island.

Seen on both sides of the Island. Their strange call is often heard at night.

79. *Trichoglossus rubritorquis*. Red-collared Lorikeet.

Trichoglossus rubritorquis Vigors and Horsfield, Trans. Linn. Soc. Lond. vol. xv. 1826, p. 291 : North-west Australia.

This species is very numerous, and is found in all the trees that are in full bloom. It eats the flowers of the trees as well as the honey.

80. *Psitteuteles versicolor mellori*. Northern Varied Lorikeet.

Trichoglossus versicolor mellori Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 259 : South Alligator, Northern Territory.

This bird was very common while the trees were in bloom in November, but went away when the trees finished flowering, returning again when the Paper-bark trees bloomed in February, but not in such numbers as previously. None were found on the north side.

81. *Calyptorhynchus banksii macrorhynchus*. Great-billed Cockatoo.

Calyptorhynchus macrorhynchus Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. for 1842, 1843, p. 138 : Port Essington.

These Cockatoos are fairly numerous from September onwards. They feed on the seeds of a species of Eucalyptus which has large crops of big seed-vessels; these latter are as big as the ball of a large thumb. They left early in December. A few small flocks passed over in January and February, and by June they were again plentiful.

82. *Cacatoes galerita melvillensis*. Northern White Cockatoo.

Cacatoes galerita melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 36 : Melville Island.

These Cockatoos are sparingly distributed over the Island. They feed on the large seeds of the Pandanus.

83. *Ducorpsius gymnopsis apsleyi*. Melville-Island Bare-eyed Cockatoo.

Cacatoes gymnopsis apsleyi Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 36 : Melville Island.

Many small flocks of two or three were seen devouring the seeds of the Eucalyptus favoured by *Calyptorhynchus*; they are fairly common and sometimes seen feeding on the ground.

84. *Aprosmictus erythropterus coccineopterus*. Crimson-winged Parrot.

Ptistes coccineopterus Gould, Handb. Birds Austr. vol. ii. 1865, p. 39 : Port Essington.

These birds are very numerous at times, in flocks up to twenty in number, but are more often in small parties of about half a dozen. In the large flocks there are usually several males in full plumage, and in the small lots generally only one male. They feed on the small figs, and are not so plentiful on the north side of the Island.

85. *Platycercus venustus venustus*. Smutty Parrot.

Psittacus venustus Kuhl, Nov. Act. Phys. Acad. Leop.-Carol. vol. x. 1820, p. 52: Arnhem Land.

These Parrots are very numerous, and can be seen in small flocks or in pairs, and are scattered through the forest-country. They are very tame. They were rare on the north side. In February they were seen feeding in the mangroves, but they usually obtain their nourishment from grass seeds on the ground. They are non-migratory.

86. *Podargus strigoides melvillensis*. Melville - Island Frogmouth.

Podargus strigoides melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 37: Melville Island.

Fairly numerous, except on the north side of the Island. In November they had half-grown young. Their moaning call was heard nearly every night. If shot in the early morning, their stomachs were found stuffed full of food, but in the evening contained only a few wing-cases of beetles.

87. *Ægotheles cristata leucogaster*. White-bellied Owlet Nightjar.

Ægotheles leucogaster Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1844, p. 106: Port Essington.

This species is occasionally heard during the daytime on dull rainy days. The day call is loud and harsh. At night the call is squeaky. It is more numerous on the north side. When lodged in the big trees during the day it is hard to flush. In the north-west Mr. Rogers usually found them in small hollow trees, and could easily dislodge them by tapping the outside of the tree.

88. *Eurystomus orientalis bravi*. Western Roller.

Eurystomus orientalis bravi Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 285: Parry's Creek, North-west Australia.

The first one was seen on the 16th of October and another on the 10th of November. These were the only two observed.

89. *Alcyone azurea pulchra*. Purple Kingfisher.

Alcyone pulchra Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1846, p. 19 : Port Essington.

This bird seems common, and the first one was obtained on the 26th of October on a freshwater creek. Others have been seen in the mangrove-creeks. They nest on the fore-shore on Apsley Straits, where the sea is washing away the land; here they find a convenient eastern bluff, in which the nesting-holes are visible. On the great swamp a few were seen in the Paper-bark trees. They are resident throughout the year.

90. *Micralcyone pusilla ramsayi*. Northern Little Kingfisher.

Alcyone ramsayi North, Ibis, 1912, p. 119: Port Essington. Rare.

91. *Dacelo leachii nana*. Dwarf Fawn-breasted Kingfisher.

Dacelo leachii nana Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 37 : Melville Island.

Common.

92. *Cyanalcyon macleayi distinguendus*. Western Forest-Kingfisher.

Halcyon macleayi distinguendus Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 288: South Alligator River, Northern Territory.

The nest was placed at the end of a tunnel in a small termites' nest in the fork of a small wattle, about 15 feet from the ground. The birds had scooped out the whole interior of the structure. The eggs were placed on fine fragments of the termites' nest. The entrance-hole was about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches across and the nesting-chamber 8 inches by 8 by 5 high.

Eggs. Clutch 5, white; 24 mm. by 21. Date 9 Nov., 1911.

This Kingfisher was very common, and was usually found in the forest, but was sometimes seen on the edge of the mangroves. During October many birds were observed making holes in termites' nests, in some cases 50 feet from the ground. It was also common in the large belt of Pandanus which fringes the outer edge of the great swamp.

In this latter locality they live in part on fish, as a small mullet about an inch and a half long was found in the stomach of one individual, as well as bones and scales of other fish and fragments of insects.

This species does not fish like *Alcyone*, but flies down to the surface of the water, in a slanting direction, and merely seems to dip the beak and perhaps its head into the water; the whole action resembles the catching of a small lizard or other prey on land, where the bird often flies down, seizes its prey, and returns to its perch, without alighting on the ground. It is a resident.

93. *Sauropatis sancta ramsayi*. Broad-bellied Sacred Kingfisher.

Halcyon sanctus ramsayi Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 289: Parry's Creek, Northern Territory.

This Kingfisher is common, and frequents mangrove-swamps; it is rarely seen in the forest, and its food consists of small crabs. It is a migrant.

94. *Sauropatis sordida melvillensis*. Melville-Island Mangrove-Kingfisher.

Halcyon sordidus melvillensis Mathews, Austral. Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 38: Melville Island.

This bird is fairly numerous, and is found in scattered mangroves growing along the foreshore of the tidal creeks. It is rather noisy, and can be heard for a considerable distance. It lives in small scattered parties of five or six, but may be seen singly.

Nest. In a hollow limb of a large Eucalyptus about 60 feet from the ground.

95. *Cosmærops ornatus shortridgei*. Western Bee-eater.

Merops ornatus shortridgei Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 290 : Strelly River, West Australia.

From November to December this bird was rather scarce, but during January it increased in numbers and by February was very common.

96. *Caprimulgus macrurus keatsi*. Allied Large-tailed Nightjar.

Caprimulgus macrurus keatsi Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 291 : Port Keats, Northern Territory.

The call of this bird is like the noise made by tapping the end of a log with a hammer. It can be heard for a considerable distance. On the 10th of October a bird was shot while it was making this peculiar call. On the 8th of November two young ones were found by flushing the old bird off them. They were placed just above the high-water mark of that morning. When the young ones were discovered, the old bird tried to draw attention to herself by flapping and struggling. These birds are rarely seen during daylight. They inhabit the mangroves, and are usually heard either in or on the outskirts of them. Occasionally they are met with along the foreshore. They are non-migratory.

97. *Micropus pacificus*. White-rumped Swift.

Hirundo pacifica Latham, Index Ornith. Suppl. 1801, p. lviii : New South Wales.

On the 15th of October a few birds passed over, flying very high ; these were the first seen ; others were noticed on the 7th of November. No others were observed.

98. *Cuculus optatus*. Oriental Cuckoo.

Cuculus optatus Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1845, p. 18 : Port Essington.

During December and January some were seen every day, but were very wild.

99. *Heteroscenes pallidus occidentalis*. Western Pallid Cuckoo.

Heteroscenes occidentalis Cabanis and Heine, Mus. Hein. vol. iv. 1862, p. 27, note: West Australia.

This bird was first seen on the 13th of January, 1912; an immature individual was noticed next day.

100. *Cacomantis pyrrophanus dumetorum*. Western Square-tailed Cuckoo.

Cuculus dumetorum Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1845, p. 19: Port Essington.

On the north side of the Island this Cuckoo was very common, but near Apsley Straits it was rare. Apparently it winters here.

Egg. Ground-colour pale stone, with a ring of lavender spots, mixed with a few of reddish, round the the larger end. Axis 18 mm., diameter 13.

101. *Neochalcites basalis wyndhami*. Western Narrow-billed Bronze Cuckoo.

Chalcococcyx basalis wyndhami Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 14: Point Torment, North-west Australia.

Rare.

102. *Lamprococcyx minutellus minutellus*. Little Bronze Cuckoo.

Chrysococcyx minutellus Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1859, p. 128: Port Essington.

Egg. Ground-colour olive-green, which, on being scraped off, reveals a pale green colour. Axis 20.5 mm., diameter 13.

Found in the nest of *Ethelornis magnirostris melvillensis*. As this is the common Bronze Cuckoo on the Island (only one other being seen, "*wyndhami*"), I am describing it as such for what it is worth.

On the 25th of October this species was observed for the first time. By December it had become more plentiful. None were seen on the north side. Apparently this bird winters here. Its note differs from that of other Bronze Cuckoos.

103. *Eudynamys orientalis subcyanocephalus*. Western Koel.

Eudynamys orientalis subcyanocephalus Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 21: Parry's Creek, North-west Australia.

Rare.

104. *Scythrops novæhollandiæ neglectus*. Little Channel-Bill.

Scythrops novæhollandiæ neglectus Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 297: Parry's Creek, North-west Australia.

Rare.

105. *Polophilus phasianinus macrourus*. Northern Coucal.

Centropus macrourus Gould, Birds Austr. vol. iv. 1847, text to pl. 92: Port Essington.

A few of these birds were seen on the 15th of October, and a month later they were quite numerous. Mr. Cooper, a resident on the Island, says they are always plentiful during the wet season on Apsley Straits, but leave for the better-watered parts of the Island when the water dries up there. When disturbed they fly up into the lower branches of a tree and then hop and climb right up to the top—if possible, balancing themselves on the topmost leaves. They seem to be actually lying on the leaves. The alarm-call is a harsh scolding note.

106. *Pulchripitta iris*. Rainbow Pitta.

Pitta iris Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1842, p. 17: Port Essington.

Rare.

107. *Hylochelidon nigricans rogersi*. Northern Tree-Martin.

Petrochelidon nigricans rogersi Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 38: Port Darwin.

These birds are fairly numerous along the foreshore; two were shot out of a flock of about 200 which were perched on a dead tree. They were most numerous during November;

by December the 10th they had become fewer, and by the 16th only a few stragglers were left. During the day only stragglers are seen, but towards sunset the birds begin to arrive from the mainland, when the air is thick with them. They then gradually gather together into a great whirling cloud, resembling a column which reaches to within fifty yards of the ground, the top being fully three hundred yards higher. They keep up their circular flight till dusk, and then drop into the mangroves, where the chorus becomes an incredibly shrill sound, not unlike that of high-pressure steam escaping. There are many thousands of birds in these columns. This is repeated every evening.

108. *Kempia flavigaster melvillensis*. Melville - Island
Lemon-breasted Flycatcher.

Micræca flavigaster melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av.
Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 39 : Melville Island.

This species is sparingly distributed, but seems more numerous in the mangroves than elsewhere.

On the 14th of January, 1912, a nest was found; both birds were seen at it, but there were no eggs. It was built in a fork of a thin branch of a Paper-bark tree, which was leaning out of the water. In size and type this nest resembled that of *Micræca pallida*.

109. *Melanodryas cucullata subpicata*. Northern Pied
Robin.

Petroica cucullata subpicata Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii.
1912, p. 306 : Alexandra, Northern Territory.

Common.

110. *Smicrornis brevirostris melvillensis*. Melville-Island
Tree-Tit.

Smicrornis brevirostris melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av.
Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 39 : Melville Island.

These birds are seen occasionally in tall timber and in parties of up to a dozen; when feeding they move slowly from tree to tree, calling incessantly. They are not nearly

so plentiful as the allied subspecies found in Kimberley, north-west Australia.

111. *Wilsonavis chloronotus apsleyi*. Melville - Island Green-backed Fly-eater.

Gerygone chloronota apsleyi Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 40: Melville Island.

This species is rare on the Island. Usually a few are seen in the small patches of jungle. On the 7th of January, 1912, a pair was noticed building a nest in a "cedar" tree, which was growing on a ridge near the great swamp. The nest was about 30 feet up. A week later the nest was half finished and deserted. In size and shape it was very like that of *Ethelornis magnirostris melvillensis*.

The song is not unlike the song of *W. lævigaster* from Derby in north-west Australia, but is shriller and not so musical.

112. *Ethelornis magnirostris melvillensis*. Melville-Island Large-billed Fly-eater.

Gerygone magnirostris melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 39: Melville Island.

These birds are found in the mangroves. Immature examples of this species have no yellow on the under surface like immature specimens of *W. lævigaster*.

The nest is dome-shaped, suspended from a small twig of a leafy tree. The opening is about halfway down. It is constructed of dried grass, the outside with spiders' cocoons more or less all over it. There is no lining. Length, outside 9 inches by 3; opening 1 inch across.

Eggs. Clutch two; white, with the larger end reddish brown and spots of the same colour distributed over the rest of the surface. Axis 16 mm., diameter 11. Breeding in November.

113. *Quoyornis leucura greda*. Melville-Island White-tailed Shrike-Robin.

Pachycephala leucura greda Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 40: Melville Island.

Not rare.

114. *Pachycephala pectoralis consobrina*. Buchanan-Island Black-tailed Thickhead.

Pachycephala gutturalis consobrina Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 76: Buchanan Island.

Common, always found in dense mangrove-brakes.

115. *Lewinornis rufiventris falcata*. Northern Rufous-breasted Thickhead.

Pachycephala falcata Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. for 1842, 1843, p. 134: Port Essington.

This is the common Thickhead of the Island, and is fairly numerous in the forests, often in the tall trees; also in the Paper-bark forest near the great swamp. It is not migratory.

116. *Alisterornis lanioides buchanani*. Allied White-bellied Thickhead.

Pachycephala lanioides buchanani Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 77: Buchanan Island.

Common.

117. *Muscitrea grisola riordani*. Melville-Island Brown Thickhead.

Pachycephala grisola riordani Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 41: Melville Island.

In November this bird was silent, but seen in dense mangroves; some were found in the Paper-bark forest. In January its note was often heard. It is a resident.

118. *Rhipidura flabellifera buchanani*. Buchanan-Island Pheasant-Fantail.

Rhipidura flabellifera buchanani Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 90: Buchanan Island.

Common.

119. *Howeavis rufifrons dryas*. Wood-Fantail.

Rhipidura dryas Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. for 1842, 1843, p. 132: Port Essington.

Very rare on the Island.

120. *Setosura setosa isura*. Northern Fantail.

Rhipidura isura Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. for 1840, 1841, p. 174: Port Essington.

A nest was built in a small wattle and placed on the top of a horizontal fork, about six feet from the ground. It was wine-glass shaped, with a tail four and a half inches long, the materials used being grass and narrow strips of Paper-bark. The outside was covered over with cobwebs. The lining consisted of very fine pieces of Paper-bark. Measurements: $2\frac{1}{4}$ by $2\frac{1}{8}$ inches deep; inside $1\frac{1}{2}$ by $1\frac{1}{2}$ by $\frac{3}{4}$ inches deep.

Eggs. Clutch two; ground-colour cream, with a zone of brown and lavender spots round the larger end. Axis 19 mm., diameter 14. They were taken in November.

These birds are numerous, both in the forest and in the mangroves, but they are never found in the dense parts of the latter.

121. *Leucocirca tricolor picata*. Western Black-and-White Fantail.

Rhipidura picata Gould, Birds Austr. vol. i. 1848, Introd. p. xxxix: Port Essington.

Not rare.

122. *Myiagra rubicula concinna*. Blue Flycatcher.

Myiagra concinna Gould, Birds Austr. vol. ii. 1848, pl. 90: Port Essington.

A nest was found about 35 feet from the ground on the 26th of October. Another one about 50 feet from the ground on the 28th. They are cup-shaped, placed on the side of a stick (which sloped at about 45 degrees) and constructed of strips of Paper-bark, with a few rootlets inside; on the outside numberless small pieces of bark are plastered all over the nest and held in place with cobwebs. Inside measurements $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches by 1 deep.

Eggs. Clutch two; ground whitish, with a ring at the larger end of large lavender and brown spots. Axis 19 mm., diameter 14-15.

123. *Myiagra latirostris latirostris*. Broad-bellied Flycatcher.

Myiagra latirostris Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. for 1840, 1841, p. 172: Port Essington.

This species inhabits the dense mangroves, and can often be heard, but not seen.

124. *Piezorhynchus alecto nitidus*. Shining Flycatcher.

Piezorhynchus nitidus Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. for 1840, 1841, p. 171: Port Essington.

These birds also live in the mangroves, but are common on Jessie Creek and round the edges of the great swamp, miles away from the mangroves. They creep about among the roots of the mangroves, searching for their food in the mud. On the 26th of January, 1912, a nest was found, which contained three naked black-skinned young. The nest was built in a mangrove growing in a scattered clump near the beach.

125. *Coracina novæhollandiæ subpallida*. North-western Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike.

Coracina novæhollandiæ subpallida Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 326: North-west Australia.

These birds are not numerous on the Island, but small parties have been seen flying high over the trees; they are migratory, leaving in November and returning in May.

126. *Coracina hypoleuca hypoleuca*. White-bellied Cuckoo-Shrike.

Coracina hypoleuca Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1848, p. 38: Port Essington.

This is one of the commonest species on the Island; on the 10th of December three birds in young plumage were procured, showing that they had lately bred. It appears resident, but is not so common on the north side of the Island.

127. *Metagraucalus tenuirostris melvillensis*. Melville-Island Caterpillar-catcher.

Coracina tenuirostris melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 43 : Melville Island.

Occasionally a pair is seen, but it is decidedly a rare bird, though more numerous on the north side. This species was not noticed by Mr. Rogers anywhere in north-west Australia.

128. *Lalage tricolor indistincta*. Pale-rumped Caterpillar-eater.

Lalage tricolor indistincta Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 328 : Wyndham, North-west Australia.

This species is very rare on the Island, only one bird being seen on the 1st of November.

129. *Karua leucomela rufiventris*. Banded Caterpillar-eater.

Campephaga rufiventris Gray, Genera Birds, vol. i. 1846, p. 283 : Raffles Bay, Northern Territory.

This is rather a silent bird, its note being more like that of *Metagraucalus tenuirostris melvillensis* than that of *Lalage tricolor indistincta*. Its favourite haunts are the dense growths along creeks and the clumps of heavily foliated trees and shrubs. In comparison with *L. tricolor indistincta* it is a "skulker," moving quietly about amongst the branches. It is a confirmed fruit-eater, the stomachs, as a rule, containing little else than the smaller native fruits. It is sometimes seen in the open forest-country and is a resident.

130. *Pomatostomus temporalis rubeculus*. Red-breasted Babbler.

Pomatorhinus rubeculus Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. for 1839, 1840, p. 144 : Port Essington.

These birds are numerous, and are found in the forest-country. They breed on the Island, as two young ones were shot on the 7th of November; they are non-migratory.

131. *Conopoderas australis melvillensis*. Northern Reed-Warbler.

Acrocephalus australis melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 77: Melville Island.

Not common.

132. *Cisticola exilis lineocapilla*. Northern Grass-Warbler.

Cysticola lineocapilla Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1847, p. 1: Port Essington.

Common.

133. *Dulciornis alisteri melvillensis*. Melville - Island Grass-Bird.

Megalurus alisteri melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 92: Melville Island.

Not common.

134. *Ryania melanocephala cruentata*. Red-backed Wren.

Malurus cruentatus Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. for 1839, 1840, p. 143: Port Essington.

This species is numerous, and appears to mate in December; by February they were in pairs and the males in fine plumage. It is usually seen in long grass.

135. *Artamus leucorhynchus harterti*. Western White-rumped Wood-Swallow.

Artamus leucorhynchus harterti Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 367: Parry's Creek, North-west Australia.

This species is very plentiful, and is the only member of the genus *Artamus* found on the Island. A nest was found on the 4th of November; by the 16th it contained an egg. It was built in a small gum-tree overhanging the sea-beach, and was placed in a bunch of shoots which was growing from where a branch had broken off.

This Wood-Swallow appears to frequent the foreshore, as none were met with inland, excepting a few noticed on the Paper-bark trees in the great swamp.

136. *Colluricincla brunnea brunnea*. Brown Shrike-Thrush.

Colluricincla brunnea Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. for 1840, 1841, p. 164: Port Essington.

These are plentiful in the forest-country, and usually feed on the ground. They are residents.

137. *Conigravea parvula omissa*. Melville-Island Shrike-Thrush.

Colluricincla parvula omissa Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. ii. 1913, p. 68: Melville Island.

This species is numerous in the dense growths along the creeks or in the mangroves. The note is a loud whistle, rather like that of *C. brunnea*. It is also common in the swamps and small jungles on the north side.

138. *Grallina cyanoleuca neglecta*. Little Magpie-Lark.

Grallina cyanoleuca neglecta Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 372: Parry's Creek, North-west Australia.

Not rare.

139. *Melloria quoyi spaldingi*. Allied Butcher-Bird.

Cracticus spaldingi Masters, Proc. Linn. Soc. N.S.W. vol. ii. 1877, p. 271: Port Darwin, Northern Territory.

Usually these birds are found where the mangroves are tall and dense, but occasionally they are seen on the outskirts of the belts of this growth. They keep to the same locality, and can be heard, if not seen, day after day near the same spot. They are noisy birds with strange loud notes, and are rather difficult to see. The natives say they never leave the mangroves. They breed on the Island in January.

140. *Cracticus nigrogularis picatus*. Pied Butcher-Bird.

Cracticus picatus Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. 1848, p. 40: Port Essington.

This species frequents the forest-country in small parties, and is usually to be found on some ridges about Apsley Straits. It is not very numerous and is rather wild.

141. *Neositta pileata melvillensis*. Melville Island Tree-Runner.

Neositta pileata melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 47 : Melville Island.

This species is rare on the Island, only a few parties being seen, and these usually in the tops of the tall trees. They go about in flocks of five or six. Mr. Rogers found the allied subspecies in north-west Australia.

142. *Zosterops lutea lutea*. Yellow White-eye.

Zosterops lutea Gould, Birds Austr. vol. iv. 1843, pl. 83 : Van Diemen Gulf, Northern Territory.

A few birds of this species were met with near Apsley Straits, but none on the north side of the Island. On the 6th of November a nest and two eggs were found, but the latter could not be blown, as the young were on the point of hatching. The nest was of the usual type and placed in the mangroves, where the birds themselves are usually met with. They are residents.

143. *Austrodicæum hirundinaceum tormenti*. Western Mistletoe-Bird.

Dicæum hirundinaceum tormenti Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 387 : Point Torment, North-west Australia.

Very few of these birds have been seen on the Island ; they are always on trees and bushes which bear mistletoe.

144. *Pardalotus melanocephalus melvillensis*. Orange-rumped Pardalote.

Pardalotus melanocephalus melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 48 : Melville Island.

Not numerous, and usually found in forest-country, but sometimes seen in low bushes on the foreshore. On the north side they were found in the Paper-bark forest. They are resident and non-migratory.

145. *Melethreptus lunata albogularis*. White-throated Honey-eater.

Melethreptus albicularis Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. for 1847, 1848, p. 220 : Port Essington.

This species is one of the commonest all over the Island, and is found on the outside edges of the mangroves as well as in the forests. It frequents trees and shrubs when they are in flower.

146. *Myzomela erythrocephala melvillensis*. Melville-Island Red-headed Honey-eater.

Myzomela erythrocephala melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 48: Melville Island.

Fairly numerous; it is nearly always found in or near the mangroves, and is never far away from them.

147. *Melomyza obscura apsleyi*. Melville-Island Dusky Honey-eater.

Myzomela obscura apsleyi Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 48: Melville Island.

These birds are found in the mangroves and jungle-growth along the creek, and a few are seen in the forests. Very few show any red on the head. They are non-migratory.

148. *Ramsayornis fasciatus apsleyi*. Melville-Island White-breasted Honey-eater.

Glyciphila fasciata apsleyi Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 49: Melville Island.

A nest found in January was dome-shaped, the opening near the top; it was built in a Paper-bark sapling leaning over Jessie Creek, and suspended from the end of a limb at a height of three feet from the water. The materials used were broad and fine strips of Paper-bark lightly fastened together with cobwebs; the lining consisted of very soft pieces of the same materials; on the outside were a few leaves. Dimensions: outside, $4\frac{1}{2}$ by $2\frac{3}{4}$ by 8 inches deep; inside, $2\frac{1}{2}$ by 2 by 4 inches deep.

It contained one fresh egg of the Honey-eater and two Cuckoo's eggs partly incubated. Most of the nests of this species contained an egg of a Cuckoo.

Eggs. Clutch two; white, with numerous reddish spots all over, but more at the larger end. Axis 20 to 20.5 mm., diameter 14.5.

This species is a real water-lover, and is never seen far

from it. It is very common on the north side, and rather rare on Apsley Strait, but was more numerous after the rain had filled some of the creeks. On the north side this bird was found all along the creeks and swamps. It is a resident.

149. *Conopophila albogularis albogularis*. Rufous-breasted Honey-eater.

Entomophila? albogularis Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. for 1842, 1843, p. 137: Port Essington.

This is another bird that was rare on Apsley Straits, but very common on the north side of the Island. On Apsley Straits it was found only in the mangroves and on the north side along the water-courses and in the big Paper-bark swamps. It is never found far from water. It was mating in January and is resident.

150. *Stigmatops indistincta melvillensis*. Melville-Island Least Honey-eater.

Stigmatops indistincta melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 50: Melville Island.

This species is very numerous, and frequents the outer edges of the mangrove-thicket—that is, on the landward side.

151. *Meliphaga sonora cooperi*. Melville-Island Singing Honey-eater.

Ptilotis sonora cooperi Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 50: Melville Island.

This Honey-eater frequents patches of stunted scrub a little inland, and lives on berries, honey, and insects.

152. *Ptilotula flavescens melvillensis*. Northern Yellow-tinted Honey-eater.

Ptilotis flavescens melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 50: Melville Island.

This species is common and is usually found in open forest, but is also seen on the outer edge of the mangroves. It is not so common on the north side and is a resident.

153. *Stomiopera unicolor brenda*. Melville-Island White-gaped Honey-eater.

Ptilotis unicolor brenda Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 50: Melville Island.

These birds are sparingly distributed in the forest-country. On the heavily timbered creeks they are rather numerous. The creeks usually have a dense growth of creepers, etc., covering the big trees, and in places the trees are covered with a cane not unlike ratan; near these dense growths the birds are most abundant. A few were seen on the north side in the jungles. They feed on berries, small figs, honey and insects, and are non-migratory.

154. *Myzantha flavigula melvillensis*. Melville - Island Yellow Minah.

Myzantha flavigula melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 51: Melville Island.

These birds are fairly numerous on the high ridge four miles from Apsley Straits, but are never seen near the sea or on the north side. They go in flocks of about twenty birds, and are very noisy and inquisitive. If one is wounded and calls out, the whole flock quickly gathers round. They feed on honey and insects, searching for the latter on the ground.

155. *Entomyzon cyanotis apsleyi*. Melville-Island White-quilled Honey-eater.

Entomyzon cyanotis apsleyi Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 51: Melville Island.

Very plentiful where trees are in bloom, especially on the north side. They are usually seen in small parties of about half a dozen individuals.

156. *Philemon argenticeps argenticeps*. Silvery-crowned Friar-Bird.

Tropidorhynchus argenticeps Gould, Proc. Zool. Soc. for 1839, 1840, p. 144: Port Essington.

This species is the common Friar-Bird of the Island, and is found both in the forest-country and in the mangroves

whenever the trees or shrubs are in flower. Nests, placed about 35 feet up, at the end of a horizontal limb, were found in October and November. It is non-migratory.

157. *Neophilemon buceroides gordonii*. Melville-Island Helmeted Friar-Bird.

Philemon buceroides gordonii Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 102 : Melville Island.

Common.

158. *Microphilemon orientalis breda*. Melville - Island Little Friar-Bird.

Philemon orientalis breda Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 51 : Melville Island.

Rather rare on the Island, and not found on the north side. It frequents forests and the heavily-timbered creeks. It lives on honey and insects, and is a resident.

159. *Anthus australis rogersi*. Melville-Island Pipit.

Anthus australis rogersi Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 193 : Melville Island.

160. *Mirafra javanica melvillensis*. Northern Bush-Lark.

Mirafra javanica melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 102 : Melville Island.

161. *Lonchura castaneothorax apsleyi*. Melville-Island Dark-breasted Finch.

Munia castaneothorax apsleyi Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 52 : Melville Island.

This Finch is found in great numbers in the mangroves, and, when shot at, flies across to Bathurst Island, which appears to be its stronghold.

162. *Mimeta sagittata affinis*. Northern Oriole.

Oriolus affinis Gould, Birds Austr. vol. i. 1848, Introd. p. liii : Port Essington.

This bird was plentiful in October, but got less abundant

up till December, when it quite left the Island. It is found in the jungle and open forest, and lives on fruit and insects.

163. *Mimeta flavocincta flavocincta*. Yellow Oriole.

Mimetes flavocinctus King, Survey Intertrop. Coasts Austr. 1826, p. 419 : Northern Territory.

This species is common in the jungles and in the heavy growth along the creeks as well as in the mangroves. In January many nests were found usually in small Paper-bark trees ; all were built of the soft outer bark of this tree. One found on the 28th of October was placed at the end of a thin horizontal limb about 35 feet from the ground. This bird lives principally on fruit but also on insects, and is a resident.

164. *Sphecotheres flaviventris ashbyi*. Northern Yellow-bellied Fig-Bird.

Sphecotheres flaviventris ashbyi Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 436 : Alligator River, Northern Territory.

The nest was built in a Paper-bark tree growing on the edge of the great swamp—the water was about 6 inches deep round the base of the tree. It was placed in a fork of a horizontal limb about six feet above the water. The outside of the nest had long strips of Paper-bark (some 20 inches long) hanging down from it, which were attached to the nest with cobwebs. The nest was cup-shaped, and composed of broad strips of Paper-bark, fastened together with cobwebs and cocoons and lined with fine twigs. Dimensions : outside, 8 inches by 5 by $4\frac{1}{2}$ deep ; inside, 4 by 3 by $2\frac{3}{4}$ deep.

Eggs. Clutch two ; ground-colour pale stone, sparingly covered with spots of yellowish brown and lavender. Axis 31.5 mm., diameter 23. Taken January 4, 1912.

This species is common, and usually found near the creeks or other places where the growth is fairly dense, such as the Paper-bark forests. On January the 28th eggs were just ready to be hatched. It is a migrant.

165. *Dicruopsis bracteatus baileyi*. Northern Spangled Drongo.

Dicruopsis bracteatus baileyi Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 437: Alligator River, Northern Territory.

The nest was cup-shaped and placed in the fork of a tree, and constructed of fine tendrils with no lining; many cocoons were plastered on the outside. Outside measurements 6 inches by 3 deep, inside $3\frac{1}{2}$ by $1\frac{1}{4}$ deep.

Eggs. Clutch three; whitish, with irregular-shaped spots of reddish and lavender, sparsely distributed over the surface, but more thickly at the larger end. Axis 30 mm., diameter 20 mm. Taken October 22, 1913.

These birds are fairly numerous in all localities, but seem to prefer the open forest. They go about in pairs or small parties, and feed chiefly on dragon-flies which they catch very skilfully, always from below. The nests are placed in a fork of a thin horizontal branch about 30 feet from the ground, and were found during October and November. One, taken on the 24th of November, had three young almost fledged.

166. *Rogersornis nuchalis melvillensis*. Melville-Island Bower-Bird.

Chlamydera nuchalis melvillensis Mathews, Austral Av. Rec. vol. i. 1912, p. 52: Melville Island.

This species is numerous on the creeks and on the outer edges of the mangroves. Several bowers were found in the last-named locality, just above high-water mark. They are not so common on the north side.

167. *Corvus cecilæ cecilæ*. Northern Crow.

Corvus coronoides cecilæ Mathews, Nov. Zool. vol. xviii. 1912, p. 442: Napier Broome Bay, North-west Australia.

Not easily obtained.